Williff Y-5 (ca. 1901) 1954 NT14 Plateau Yumans NT14
Havasupai

Vesnor and his horse. The children scampered off through the brush on the trail that led to the village. At home there would be food, the kind they were accustomed to and for which they hungered in a way no white man's viands could satisfy. Perhaps it would be the delicious corn bread their mothers made by crushing grains of new corn to a pulp, molding it into elongated shapes which were fitted into the husks of green corn and baked in the ashes. The bread would be rich and sweet and more delicious than any hardtack ever made. Or if it were the season for little green squashes, there would be another treat. The squash, cooked, mashed and mixed with the cooked grains of new corn, was a delicacy so enjoyed that the thought of it could start the children's feet running toward home. There would be food at every house they passed on the trail, and a Havasupai shared as generously as our own ancestors did before we measured our sustenance by its cost in dollars and cents.

That week another letter came from Mr. Ewing demanding that I submit the annual report immediately. He added the important news that the Hackberry Day School would open in the fall as the Truxton Canyon Training School. This would be the fulfillment of the promise he had made to the Walapai that he would establish a boarding school for their children.

Early Saturday morning I started to the Indian village to get additional information to incorporate in the annual report. The trail hugged the foot of the west wall. I had passed scattered wickiups, tucked back among the willows, before I came to a high, precipitous section of the wall that narrowed the passage. Bob, one of the tribe's medicine men, had told me that the god-spirit lived in two columns of stone on the rim of this inthrust section. The Indians had discovered these at the time they had settled in the canyon.

I had an excellent view of the two great pillars of red sandstone, as tranquil and aloof as images of Buddha. Neither white man nor Indian could fail to be impressed by them. What force placed them in that exposed position? How had they stood through the

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ages, battered by gales and floods which had brought down sections of the wall itself? The Indians must have asked themselves these questions many times. The wise men of the tribe gave them a satisfying answer: the indestructible god-spirit lived there to watch over and protect the people in their new home. The Indians spoke of these gods with the naturalness with which one mentions a neighbor or a friend.

"Our gods make gardens grow good. They watch over the people," they told me confidently.

And in a sense, I was indebted to their gods for this greatest adventure of my life. The Indians' well-being depended on these god-spirits, so they had refused to leave the canyon. When the Indian Office considered establishing a school for the Havasupai children, pressure was brought to induce the Indians to move to the plateau. It would be simpler for them to move out of the canyon than for the government to freight equipment for the school across the desert and down the precipitous trail. But the Indians became bewildered and frightened. "If we leave our gods, we die!" they cried. So the school came down to them. Yet the officials located it a little too far up the gorge for the gods to guard it with a watchful eye, which may account for the fact that, later on, it was destroyed by a flood.

Just beyond the gods, the walls swung apart. The broad, level floor between was occupied by the village. Spaciousness of land and sky inspired a sense of freedom. The cultivated acres were laid out like a checkerboard, in somewhat irregular squares, each displaying the mixed greenery of gardens and orchards. A fence of brush or poles enclosed each square, emphasizing the mosaic effect. The Indians had not completely removed the wilderness from the canyon; the stream could be traced by the tangle of wild vegetation lining its banks, and dense thickets claimed too much of the land. Old willow trees and cottonwoods dominated the scene.

The houses sat cosily near the gardens, or were connected with them by tree-shaded lanes. There were several half-dugouts, but